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ABSTRACT

Teaching and job responsibilities of full-time English teachers at St. Louis Community College at Meramec are specified in this document in order to help instructors improve the quality of instruction, to provide reliable evaluation standards, and to aid in staff selection. They also demonstrate the diversity of teacher functions and provide information for the student and public. The job description is presented as a series of statements describing the effective community college English instructor. Separate sections consider the instructor's relationship to his discipline and colleagues, his relationship to his courses, and his relationship to individual students. Within each section six statements of departmental policy are given; for each, an explanation of the intent of the policy and of ways to implement it are provided. The standards specify expectations regarding departmental participation and evaluation, appropriate teaching methods and tools, and student evaluation techniques. (RT)

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ED142257

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR FULL-TIME TEACHERS

(Final copy, April 28, 1977)

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT MERAMEC

This job description applies to all full-time teachers, both single semester and continuing faculty, employed in the English Department of St. Louis Community College at Meramec. During a regular semester a full-time teacher is assigned twelve credit hours of courses taught within the jurisdiction of the English Department (fifteen if teaching only reading courses); no more than three preparations; and no more than twenty students in reading sections, twenty-five in composition based classes, and thirty-five in literature and media courses in which writing is not the primary concern.

This job description is meant to serve several functions. It describes what we consider to be an effective community college Englisn teacher. It may be used by instructors, together with department course descriptions, to assess and enhance the quality of their instruction. It will provide the foundation for reliable and equitable evaluation standards. It can serve as a guide in selecting effective full-time staff and in helping them improve their teaching. It will demonstrate to the administration that the duties of an English teacher are diverse and demanding. Finally, this description may provide information for the student and the community about what can be expected from us.

This job description, as a matter of convenience, is divided into three major sections: the instructor's relationship to his discipline, his relationship to his courses, and his relationship to his students. Each section contains six statements of department policy. Each policy statement is in turn divided into two parts: an explanation of the intent of that policy, and an explanation of ways to implement it. The order in which the sections and policies are arranged does not imply any hierarchy.

This Job Description elaborates on the responsibilities of the effective community college English teacher. However, each faculty member is also expected to meet the general objectives, purposes, and philosophies of the St. Louis Community College District. These additional expectations are described in each instructor's contract and in the Policies and Procedures of St. Louis Community College.

Throughout this text we use the pronoun he to mean he and she. The text reads more easily this way.

Unlike most writers, who claim they use he generically while calling doctors he and secretaries she, we have tried to be consistent. We have tried to make he truly generic rather than allow it to reflect an outdated (in fact never accurate) conception of male and female roles.

CE 770 388

ORDER OF PRESENTATION:

SECTION ONE: The instructor's relationship to his discipline and his colleagues

(1) growth through writing and speaking

(1) growth through discipline-related activities

(2) department meetings

(3) committee work

(4) service area business

(5) evaluation

SECTION TWO: The instructor's relationship to his particular courses

(6) course planning

(7) teaching aids

(8) textbooks

(9) regular class meetings

(10) class goals

(11) certification

SECTION THREE: The instructor's relationship to his individual students

(12-13) student progress and deficiencies

(14) written and oral comments

(15) re-evaluation of student work

(16) criteria for evaluation

(17) office and conference hours

(18) student excuses

AN EFFECTIVE ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR:

1. PROVIDES FOR HIS PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH THROUGH A PLANNED PROGRAM OF VARIED ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THOSE OUTLINED IN THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH COMMITTEE'S REPORT (1974).

Faculty members are a college's most important educational resource. Just as material resources need special care to maintain and enhance their value, so the talents, interests and skills of faculty need to be systematically cultivated. The Professional Growth Committee Report, offers numerous suggestions around which faculty may tailor personal plans for renewal and growth. To the degree these activities contribute to the instructor's classroom performance, aiding his growth as a teacher, they are the responsibility of the instructor but also his right as a teacher. His department and college have an equal responsibility to support his growth. A teacher should expect, for example, appropriate leave and reasonable financial reimbursement for costs of conferences or conventions that enhance professional growth.

Since teaching is a complex set of attitudes, knowledge, skills, motivations and values, individual professional growth is best accomplished through a variety of means. These may include, but are by no means limited to, such activities as active participation in professional organizations, speaking and writing including professional publications, participation in conferences, in-service training, released/extended time projects, useful travel, work on committees, curriculum development and instructional innovation, graduate and under-graduate courses, group evaluations, personal scholarship and reading, community involvement, sabbatical leave projects, advising and assistance to students, faculty, or staff. Each instructor should plan an annual program to maintain and enhance his value both for his own sake and for that of the students, department and college. Because such programs reflect individual needs, no faculty member should be expected to participate in every activity in each year. Annual Reports should carefully reflect realistic, individualized growth.

2. ATTENDS SCHEDULED DEPARTMENT MEETINGS.

The department is the most basic policy-making body. Since many important decisions are reached in this forum, faculty attendance is mandatory. Regular attendance at meetings helps create an informed, cohesive faculty familiar enough with one another to deal effectively with departmental problems. Participation in meetings permits the sharing of ideas and encourages individual and departmental growth. Attendance assumes preparation as well, since we cannot expedite matters unless instructors are thoroughly familiar with the items on the agenda.

In case an instructor must be absent, he should notify the department head before the meeting. If a vote is to be called on an agenda item, the member has an option to arrange for a proxy, according to the instructions in the department working paper.

3. PARTICIPATES IN DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE WORK.

Within the department our committees help us continually study, discuss, and evaluate what we do, how we do it, and why. We all share responsibility for maintaining excellence in instruction, improving the department's programs, and keeping the department running smoothly.

Committee work involves participation of several kinds. The department head is expected to establish clearly the initial goals and charges of each committee and to suggest priorities. Then the committee chairperson should assign specific tasks to be accomplished during each meeting as well as preparatory and post-meeting work necessary to the completion of the committee's charges. Each committee member should assume responsibility for his part in the committee's work and attend all meetings or notify the chairperson, in advance, of his absence. Moreover, all department members should be aware of problems within their areas of instruction and present those concerns for committee consideration. When any standing committee has completed its charges, it should request or suggest a new charge. Ad hoc committees, upon completing their charges, should disband.

4. ASSISTS IN THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT AND DIVISION.

Since the department head alone cannot handle the number and variety of jobs which need to be done to maintain a well-informed, developing faculty, each of us must help with these jobs, especially when we have special talents. The department head may, therefore, request individual members to study particular problems of issues (e.g., questions about reading skills and placement), to report on findings or share expertise through workshops, or to represent the department at campus, college, or community functions and committees. Faculty members should also assist with the mechanics of running the department (e.g., advising applicants for Communications Arts programs, making themselves available to part-time faculty for advice and information, and maintaining the department library).

Department members should identify problems and volunteer to solve them where they can. They should respond to the department head's requests whenever possible. They should maintain cordial working relationships with colleagues, including part-time staff. They should attend the workshops designed by others as well as devise means to share their own expertise. And finally they should attend not only to their own students and classes, but also the department as it functions in the campus, college, and community.

5. PARTICIPATES IN PERIODIC EVALUATION OF HIS PERFORMANCE BY APPROVED DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, AND COLLEGE METHODS.

The evaluation process has three fundamental goals: it documents specific aspects of the instructor's performance and growth. It identifies specific aspects of his performance that can be improved. Finally, it assures that the instructor is meeting his responsibilities. Evaluation

can often give recognition and respect to teachers and confirm the value of their work.

Evaluation involves the instructor with students, colleagues, department and division heads, and the administration. Some evaluation procedures are optional; others are mandatory. For self-evaluation the instructor may use informal means such as teaching logs, anecdotal writings, videotapes, summaries, and statistical data. He may also ask colleagues to evaluate his performance. He may use the department's evaluation form or one he has designed if it has been approved by the department head, but he must request student evaluations and keep them in his file for inspection. Further, the instructor must be available for classroom visitation by the department head, the division, and/or the dean. The report of this visit and any comments the instructor adds to it will become part of his personnel file. Finally, the instructor must supply the division chairman with information which can be used in a summary of the instructor's performance.

6. PLANS AND TEACHES HIS COURSES IN KEEPING WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S GENERAL COURSE OUTLINES AND DIRECTIVES. HE FILES INDIVIDUAL COURSE PLANS IN BOTH THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AND THE COUNSELING OFFICE.

By approving general course outlines the department hopes to do the following:

a) insure that all sections of a given course will be substantially interchangeable, since the department will set uniform goals for student achievement, but will not prescribe methods for achieving these goals:

b) insure that students entering the second or third course of a sequence have similar preparation;

c) assure the frequent reconsideration of course goals.

By publishing individual course plans the department hopes to do the following:

a) provide students sufficient information about a course's goals and about an instructor's methods to permit them to choose classes intelligently;

b) enable advisors to counsel students effectively;

c) provide information to faculty and staff at Meramec, as well as to the general public, and especially to officials of transfer institutions;

d) provide a preliminary basis for assessing instructor accountability.

If all these aims are reached, we will be more likely to realize the ideal of instructor freedom within a responsible department, sensitive to the demands of institutions and to the rights of students.

An effective English instructor, therefore, understands the department course outlines and directives and develops his individual course plans accordingly. His course plan should define general goals, specify expected behavioral objectives where practical, list textbooks, and describe the teaching and grading methods used in his course.

7. SELECTS TEACHING METHODS WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE AND VALUABLE TO STUDENT LEARNING.

Effective and creative teaching involves methods appropriate to the subject and the students. A few appropriate methods are the use of audio-visual materials, handouts, guest lecturers, small group discussions, team teaching, field trips, and class projects. An instructor needs to become familiar with various tactics and their relative effectiveness, appropriateness, and limitations in the classroom.

Several sources can help an instructor locate, learn about, and evaluate the various teaching techniques. Among these are college and district instructional resources, the department library, bibliographies, media and teaching publications, workshops and conferences, and frequent interchanges among colleagues teaching similar courses.

8. FOLLOWS DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR ADOPTION OF TEXTBOOKS AND MINIMIZES COST TO STUDENTS BY REQUIRING THEM TO PURCHASE ONLY THOSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS ESSENTIAL TO THE COURSE.

Creating departmental guidelines for adoption of textbooks insures that instructors will share opinions and information about textbooks with their colleagues. The process of evaluating textbooks encourages professional growth and helps to develop uniform professional standards in the department by providing an opportunity for evaluating books in the light of departmentally approved course requirements. And contact with a variety of opinion fosters the use of textbooks of adequate scope and diverse content. Furthermore, the democratic process of discussion, argument, and counter-argument preceding adoption of textbooks, together with the framework provided by departmental guidelines makes it likely that instructors whose courses or sections are changed at the last minute will have textbooks they already know and can work with comfortably. Finally, by accepting this provision we affirm that we recognize the importance of considering the educational expenses of our students and that by holding costs down we help make education more available to them.

Choosing textbooks wisely means staying aware of the textbooks available for each course an instructor teaches. This task involves reading catalogs and professional journals, ordering and reviewing books, talking to salespeople, checking prices, discussing texts with colleagues, working with department committees to establish choices, cooperating with

the bookstore, and helping maintain an up-to-date department library. Holding down costs may also mean using the resources of the department and of the reserve desk in the library. Special articles or sections of books may then be used without requiring students to purchase additional texts. Any duplication of materials as a means of reducing costs to the student should be made in accordance with current copyright laws.

9. MEETS ALL CLASSES AT THE SCHEDULED TIMES AND FOR THE ALLOTTED TIME PERIODS OR MAKES PROPER ARRANGEMENTS IN CASE HE MUST BE ABSENT.

The English Department affirms the instructor's special importance to the learning process, recognizing that he is a specialist in an academic discipline but that it is as a teacher that he exercises his specialty. The requirement that the instructor meet his classes promptly and regularly underlines this importance. By accepting it we also recognize that the instructor is accountable to the college and to the community at large. By meeting classes faithfully we also acknowledge that we are role models for our students and are willing to show the responsibility we expect them to accept. Finally, we view regular class meetings as indispensable to achieving coherent instruction and valuable interchange among the students. However, we see the need for some flexibility in the requirement for meeting classes so that justifiable innovations in instruction are not foreclosed.

When the instructor is absent from his classroom, he must notify the appropriate secretary, who will then orally notify the class, either in person or by messenger. An instructor teaching night classes must, by the second week of the semester, supply the appropriate secretary with his class rolls, including telephone numbers of all students. In case he must be absent, then, the instructor will notify the secretary, giving him ample time to arrange for telephone cancellation. An instructor teaching satellite classes must follow the same procedure, except that he must also inform the Division of Continuing Education, which will arrange for posting of notices of cancelled classes at the satellite campus. In case of extended absence, the instructor, with the agreement of the department head, must arrange some means of discharging his classroom responsibilities, such as providing compensatory assignments or substitute instructors.

10. ANNOUNCES, PREFERABLY IN WRITING, THE CONTENTS, GOALS AND REQUIREMENTS OF EACH COURSE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TERM AND, WHEN FEASIBLE, PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH A SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS. DURING EACH CLASS THE INSTRUCTOR WILL ALSO IDENTIFY THE TOPICS AND PURPOSES OF THAT MEETING.

Students are often uncertain about the objectives of the courses we teach and the specific purposes of individual class sessions, so such information helps them to establish study priorities or, in fact, to decide whether they can even meet the requirements of the course. The

more specific the teacher can be about what students are supposed to achieve as a result of the course, the better he will be able to choose the course content and select appropriate methods and media, arrange topics in sequence, decide on the amount of time to be allotted to each topic, and evaluate the results of instruction.

In preparing a written explanation of the course for his students, the instructor may use handbooks, if available, or adapt his course description filed with the English Department and the Counseling Office. The instructor can link general class goals and the topic(s) or purpose(s) of each class session by using any one of several techniques: behavioral objectives, discussion of sample assignments, pretests, handouts, or periodic reviews.

11. CERTIFIES, ACCORDING TO HIS PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT, THAT ANY STUDENT WHO EARNS CREDIT FOR A COURSE HAS SHOWN AT LEAST THE MINIMUM LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT SPECIFIED IN THE COURSE OUTLINE.

The English Department seeks to insure that the final course grade each instructor assigns to a student's work accurately reflects that student's competence in the subject matter of the course. A close correspondence between course grade and student performance is vital to each department member's professional integrity and to the academic reputation of the English Department and the college. The Department believes that once the instructor has clearly defined his evaluative standards to himself and his students, he will have a clearer view of what each student needs in order to perform well in the class. Moreover, students will be more uniformly prepared for the latter part of any sequential course program we offer. Careful, consistent evaluation can help improve student performance and contribute to satisfying demands for instructor accountability.

Evaluation of student achievement involves several related steps on the instructor's part. He must first clearly define his standards in keeping with department and college philosophy and explain those standards to his students. He should then provide ample opportunity for his students to demonstrate their competence. Pre-tests, post-tests, "ungraded" exercises, class participation, games, simulations, videotape exercises, projects, and oral reports are among the devices which can be considered to augment regular papers and examinations. The instructor must also be certain that his evaluative techniques accurately and fairly reflect the extent to which each student has developed competence in the subject matter of the course. He must keep accurate records of all assignments given in class and the evaluations of each student. And he must assign a final grade based on announced methods. Instructors should explain the weight of each evaluation, and what factors are considered in reaching the final grade. Having followed these steps, an instructor will have adequate justification for the final grade.

12. PERIODICALLY INFORMS HIS STUDENTS OF THEIR PROGRESS IN THE COURSE.

The community college expects its instructors to encourage each student's educational growth. Individual attention, one of our major goals, makes the community college experience a unique one for our students. Besides helping the student realize he is responsible for his own performance, such attention should create a rapport between the student and instructor.

Early in the semester the instructor should discuss with his students the means he will use to inform them of their progress. These means may include conferences, midterm reports, and other evaluations. An instructor should also encourage his students to inquire on their own about their progress. An instructor should make his appraisals informative and instructive, not merely judgmental.

13. IDENTIFIES FOR EACH STUDENT ANY APPARENT DEFICIENCIES IN ENTRY SKILLS WHICH MAY PREVENT HIS MAKING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN THE COURSE. HE THEN ADVISES THE STUDENT HOW TO OVERCOME THESE DEFICIENCIES AND FOLLOWS UP ON THE STUDENT'S PROGRESS.

Any student may at times need individual help, particularly when his entry skills are so deficient as to prevent his meeting course goals. These deficiencies may be psychological as well as academic. As teachers, we wish to increase the student's chances of success by giving him individual help. All faculty, therefore, should be aware of the various department and college services which provide such individual assistance. Follow-up encourages the student and allows the instructor to evaluate the ways these services help the student achieve the goals of the course.

By the fourth week of the semester, the instructor should have discussed with each problem student deficiencies which may prevent satisfactory course completion. He should have advised the student what facilities are available and what it will cost him in time and effort to correct his deficiencies. The instructor should be supportive but honest in his assessment. Services available to students include the English Learning Center, the Reading and Study Skills Center, the library Self-Instruction Center, college and departmental counselors, and private tutoring. Instructor follow-up should include contact with those service centers, conferences with the student about his progress, and encouragement through oral and written comments on the student's work. In some cases, the most honest evaluation may be to advise the student to drop the course and enroll in an appropriate preparatory class.

14. MAKES CONSTRUCTIVE WRITTEN AND/ORAL COMMENTS ABOUT EACH ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED FOR EVALUATION AND PROVIDES ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND ADVICE ABOUT THE WORK AS REQUESTED BY THE STUDENT.

The English Department affirms the usefulness of evaluation in teaching and reaffirms the desirability of making it positive rather than punitive. Writing specific comments and instructions is the most

demanding and time consuming task in the profession. Yet these comments help the instructor to individualize his teaching and guide the student in a manner suitable to his needs and abilities. By using constructive criticism the instructor can describe deficiencies in the student's work while positively reinforcing what is good in it.

When evaluating written work, the instructor should carefully read all papers himself and, when appropriate, make marginal comments, assign a letter grade, and prepare summary comments. He should also take care to return manuscripts promptly so that students may benefit from his criticisms before submitting similar work. Normally, papers and tests for Composition and Communications courses should be returned in a week, and ideally sooner so that students may read and digest comments while the material is still fresh enough to be meaningful. Longer papers, such as those for Composition II and literature courses, should be returned within two weeks. When oral evaluation would be more helpful than written comments, the instructor should encourage students to consult with him during office hours as well as in class. Evaluation of non-written work should show the same concern for constructive criticism as is shown for the evaluation of written work.

15. SUBMITS FOR CONSIDERATION BY A COLLEAGUE AN ASSIGNMENT WHICH A STUDENT THINKS HAS NOT BEEN FAIRLY EVALUATED.

In any teaching situation the potential for unfair or biased grading exists. Therefore, the instructor must provide each student with recourse through which he may affirm the reliability of grading practices in the English department. Such a procedure may help the instructor assess the validity of his evaluative techniques and aid him in reconsidering those which he finds in considerable disagreement with those of colleagues.

The instructor should, with the student's agreement, choose as second reader for a disputed paper, a colleague, other than his office partner, who regularly teaches the same course. The instructor should provide the second reader a duplicate of the original paper, from which all identifying marks, correction symbols, marginal or terminal comments, and letter grade have been removed. This copy should be accompanied by an explanation of the writing assignment and any pertinent criteria by which the paper is to be evaluated--in effect a re-creation of the conditions governing the original assignment. The second reader should prepare a written evaluation of the paper and assign a letter grade, if applicable, and these should then be given the student. If the instructor declines to alter the grade he originally gave the paper, the student may request a third reading, to be done under conditions identical to those described above. If, after the third written evaluation, the instructor declines to alter the grade originally given, whether because the second and/or third readings support his evaluation or because he disagrees with the evaluations given by the second and third readers, the matter should be submitted to the department head for discussion. However, the final decision as to the grade rests with the instructor.

16. ANNOUNCES IN WRITING THE CRITERIA UPON WHICH STUDENTS' WORK WILL BE EVALUATED.

Written criteria for evaluation are necessary if students are to successfully gauge the quality of their work. Moreover, if they fully grasp the reasoning behind the evaluation of an assignment, they will be better equipped to improve on the next. Since an instructor's emphases are reflected in his criteria, students should also become more efficient in their study habits once they see the connection between emphasized material and success or failure in the course. If an instructor clarifies that connection, he will enhance the effectiveness of his instruction.

The instructor must outline general criteria early in the semester, describing them as clearly as possible. These should be consistent with departmental guidelines. An instructor can develop his own statement of evaluation procedures or rely on the English Department Handbook, sample student work or checksheets. In setting up individual assignments, an instructor may also find it helpful to single out specific criteria for emphasis at that time.

17. IS AVAILABLE IN HIS OFFICE FOR CONFERENCES A MINIMUM OF SIX HOURS PER WEEK AT THE TIMES ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS AND POSTED OUTSIDE THE OFFICE. AN INSTRUCTOR ALSO ARRANGES SPECIAL CONFERENCE TIMES FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT MEET HIM DURING REGULAR OFFICE HOURS.

The English Department believes that teaching takes place in the instructor's office as well as in the classroom. Conferences reinforce course materials and provide individual attention to help a student's understanding. Conferences may also provide a chance to build rapport with a particular student and to find personal ways of involving him in the course. A student may also rely on office hours for practical, short-term assistance in such matters as clarifying an assignment. Finally, office hours allow direct, immediate feedback about the class itself and can be important to the teacher's growth as well as the student's. Maintaining regular office hours will encourage students to drop by (since they may schedule their visits with confidence that the instructor will be in) and enable others on campus to reach the instructor. Particularly at a community college, a student's work and home life may make it necessary to arrange special conferences at agreeable times.

An instructor should post his office hours on his bulletin board and give them to the department secretary and appropriate dean by the second week of classes. He should also announce his hours to each class in writing early in the semester and mention them several times thereafter. Some instructors include their office hours on assignment sheets or jot them on graded papers. Announcements should also clearly indicate that special arrangements can be made when necessary. When an instructor cannot be in or must change office hours, he should notify the secretary and explain any special instruction for students.

18. CONSIDERS A STUDENT'S EXCUSES FOR ABSENCE AND LATE WORK AND, WHEN THE SITUATION WARRANTS, ARRANGES FOR THE STUDENT TO MAKE UP THE WORK.

Fairness demands that valid excuses be accepted, especially from the conscientious student. Most Meramec students have outside responsibilities such as families or jobs that can occasionally make attending class or submitting an assignment on time impossible. Although student problems must be treated individually, an instructor is not obligated to accept late work or to tolerate excessive absence from class.

At the beginning of the semester the instructor should make clear his policy on attendance and submission of assignments. In this way the instructor will avoid confusion among his students and provide himself a basis on which to make subsequent decisions about late work and missed classes. Whatever policy the instructor establishes, he must be cautious about deviations from that standard, for classroom opportunists will be quick to take advantage of such inconsistencies. The instructor should not, of course, be so rigid in applying his standards that he is prevented from making an occasional exception for a deserving student with a valid excuse. Nevertheless, the student is responsible for seeking out missed assignments and completing them as instructed by the teacher. Students who repeatedly submit assignments late or miss classes should be reminded of the consequences.

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